R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 011 207 RC 000 206

POLICIES FOR THE TEXAS SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT, 1962.

PUB DATE 62

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.09 HC-$0.36 9P.

DESCRIPTORS- *COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS, ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION, ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY, INSERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION, EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT, *SMALL SCHOOLS, SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, SCHOOL SIZE, *PROGRAM GUIDES, ADMINISTRATOR ROLE, PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, *COOPERATIVE PLANNING PROJECTS, TEXAS SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT

CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE TEXAS SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT WERE PRESENTED. THE CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION INCLUDED A TOTAL SCHOOL ENROLLMENT OF 500 OR LESS, MEETING ACCREDITATION STANDARDS, EXPRESSING AN INTEREST IN IMPROVING THEIR SCHOOL PROGRAMS, AND BEING WILLING TO COOPERATE WITH OTHER PROJECT MEMBERS. OUTLINES OF THE GOALS AND POLICIES OF THE PROJECT, INCLUDING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PROJECT STAFF, PROCEDURES FOR ENTRANCE INTO THE PROJECT, AND ACTIVITIES OF SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN THE PROJECT WERE LISTED. (FS)

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POLICIES FOR THE TEXAS SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT
1962

INTRODUCTION

In 1959 the Texas Small Schools Association and the Texas Education Agency initiated a cooperative project designed to improve educational opportunities offered children in small schools of Texas. This program, designated as the Texas Small Schools Project, had the following goals:

1. To improve the quality of the instructional program.
2. To broaden course offerings.
3. To develop new methods and techniques of teaching.
4. To increase professional competencies of administrators and staff.

In September, 1960, this Project got underway with 18 schools participating. Member schools were those which had a total enrollment of 500 or less, were meeting accreditation standards, had expressed interest in improving their school program, and were willing to cooperate with other members of the Texas Small Schools Project in working toward mutual objectives. By July, 1962, member schools numbered 57.

To July, 1962, the Project operated under the immediate supervision of a Project Director, appointed by the Commissioner of Education. Activities of participating schools were directed by a local committee. Project schools were grouped in regions, and each region operated under the

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general supervision of a regional committee made up of the local committee members from each of the Project schools.

II. POLICIES

The Small Schools operates under the following policies:

A. Activities of Project Staff

1. Coordinating the over-all Project.

a. Carry on administrative procedures of program implementation:

(1) Coordinate the scheduling of regional meetings.

(2) Process applications of schools entering the Project.

(3) Evaluate Project proposals of all schools.

(4) Develop informational materials such as survey instruments, guides for self-evaluation, suggestions for uses of community resources.

(5) Prepare instruments designed to effect Project evaluation.

(6) Collect, interpret, and share with member schools the results of experimentation submitted by Project schools.

(7) Publish a Newsletter of Project activities.

(8) Publish an annual report of Project activities and of the Summer Workshop.

(9) Prepare articles for publication in state and national magazines.

(10) Develop suggested courses of study and units of work suitable for experimental classes.

b. Maintain liaison with other small schools projects; share ideas with them and, when possible, attend their meetings.

c. Work with other consultants (agency, college, and public school) to gather information needed by Project school personnel.

d. Attend regional meetings.

e. Plan and coordinate an annual workshop to provide in-service training for teachers and administrators engaged in small school improvement program.

2. Working with beginning Project schools.

a. Make a pre-school visit of one full day in each school.

(1) Work with superintendent and board members outlining the purposes of the Project.

(2) Provide superintendent and teachers with materials to help initiate first year activities.

b. Early in the school year schedule a full-day visit in each new school.

(1) Meet with total staff for Project orientation session.

(2) Visit each teacher individually, determine special needs each may have, and set up plans for meeting these needs.

c. Schedule frequent consultative visits.

3. Working with second-year Project schools.
   a. Make full-day consultative visits to each of these schools, scheduling the visit during the week of the regional meeting.
   b. Collect and make available to schools the research which has been conducted over the nation in the areas of second-year experimentation.
   c. Continue to respond to requests for information.
4. Working with Project schools with more than two years participation.
   a. Provide consultative visits as considered practical by the Project Director.
   b. Adapt for the use of Project schools the results of research done in the areas in which they are experimenting.
   c. Serve as consultant in special clinics.

B. <u>Procedures for Entrance into Project</u>

1. To participate in the Project a school should have a program that meets current accreditation standards.
2. The school should submit a tentative application by October 1 preceding the school year in which it desires to begin participation. This application must be approved by board action and signed by the president of the school board and the superintendent.
3. The school should be visited by consultants familiar with the Project who will meet with the local committee

to make explanations and to determine the school's interest in, and support of, the Project.

4. Schools should be financially able to provide the necessary equipment and supplies for participation in the Project.
5. The superintendent and participating teachers should attend all project approved workshops.
6. Schools being admitted should be in geographical proximity to existing regions, except in those areas in which no region now exists, a new region may be created should the need arise.
7. In schools approved for participation, accreditation standards in areas of experimentation may be waived temporarily by the Texas Education Agency.
8. Schools failing to make reports regularly, at the time requested, and to abide by all other rules and regulations may be dropped for the Project.

C. Activities of Schools Participating in Project

Activities for program improvement will be developed and carried on by local school staffs under the following suggested policies:

1. All project schools shall submit reports each year on or before the deadline dates here indicated:

Project Commitment.	September 20
Mid-year Revision	February 1
Community Survey.	December 1
Registration for Summer Workshop.	April 1

Regional report . . . . . .May 1

Total school evaluation (a complete or progress report). . . . . May 20

Evaluation of Project activities. . . . . May 20

Progress report on follow-up studies of graduates and drop-outs . . . . . June 1

Deadline dates for submitting testing results . . . . . .to be set

2. <u>All project schools</u> may participate in a special study of school board policy development.

3. <u>All project schools</u> will use the S.R.A. testing program for grades 7, 9, and 11.

4. <u>Schools entering the Project for the first year</u> will confine their activities to the following areas:

   a. Conduct a community survey to determine educational needs of children in the community and the willingness of the community to support a school program designed to meet these needs.

   b. Initiate a complete self-evaluation program of the school to seek out ways of eliminating weaknesses and mean of capitalizing on strengths.

   c. Evaluate the current guidance and testing programs.

   d. Begin follow-up studies on drop-outs and graduates to determine the best program to meet the needs of all children.

   e. During the spring semester of the first year's participation, pre-register all students to plan a program which will meet more realistically each

student's needs, interests, and abilities.

f. Begin a survey of community resources available to the school.

5. Schools entering the Project for the second year will continue previous activities, including pre-registration, and begin specific program revisions. They may give consideration to experimentation in one or several of the following activities:

a. multiple classes

b. supervised correspondence courses

c. teaching machines and programed teaching materials

d. cooperative service programs, including shared teachers, equipment and materials, and supervision

e. school aides

f. flexible scheduling

g. instructional materials centers

6. Schools entering the third year of Project activities will continue experimentation and consider expansion in other areas, including:

a. elementary program improvement

b. ungraded classes, primary through secondary

c. seminars for talented youth

d. team teaching

e. large and small group instruction